WHIRRAKEE

December 2001 Vol. 22 No. 11

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. Usually, the invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper. If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised. Starting time for workshops is 7.00pm. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members:
Kate Lottkowitz; Trevor Marshall; Rob Moors, Jan Orr, Stan Pelczynski; Bob Ruddick

Excursions Excursions are conducted irregularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active sub-group:

Mammal Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Front Cover: Kate and Emily Lottkowitz

Recently (19/11/01), Emily Lottkowitz noticed a Black Duck suddenly fly out from amongst the horses at their place in Mandurang. She went back to have a look later, just in case she could find a nest.....the front cover shows what she found!

Just to let you know, this (rather excellent) photo was taken with a digital camera and the image was sent via e-mail to me (address on inside front cover). I believe, this is an fantastic way of ensuring a supply of pictures. As more people have digital cameras and access to the internet we could put more pictures into the *Whirrakee*. This would make the magazine more attractive and it would be less time consuming, easier and cheaper!! Please give this a go if you have the facilities.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 22, No. 11, December 2001

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

CONTENT

Item	Contributor	Page
Bird Group Observations	Kerrie Norris	3
Some October/November Sightings at Neilborough	Pam and John Land	4
Fauna Study Group – Bark Shelter Study	Ian Fenselau	5
November General Meeting: Speakers Brenda and Gary Cheers, W.R.I.N.	Sabine Wilkens	5
News from the Garden	Barbara Pelczynska	6
The BFNC Garden in November 2001	Matthew Comer	6
Reports of Club members' activities		7
Wellsford Watch: (Long) Response to Jon Cuddy's letter	Jenny Shield	8
Peoplescape, a Celebration of Federation Project	Barbara Pelczynska	10
Media Release – Spider Book Launch		11
VFNCA 2002 March Campout: two more pages of original circular and update	FNC Victoria Inc	12

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editors' Note
Does anybody have any spare issues of the July and August Whirrakee lying around? Due to a blib in the system, our librarian Diane Collier is short of issues for these two months for our permanent collection and binding. If you still have these issues and can part with them, please give Diana a ring (her number is on the inside cover of Whirrakee).
The new BFNC publication about spiders will be launched at the December meeting (see back cover). This should be a very special occasion. Consider attending, and then stay for the Christmas dinner – we always have a very nice time. I'll be gallivanting somewhere around the world and that night, I might well wish I was at the meeting instead.
As usual, there will be no Whirrakee in January. The first edition for 2002 will not come out till February. If is often a lean (and occasionally late) edition, so please make it happen by writing down your holiday experiences and sending them early in the new year.

Bird Group Observations

Shadbolt ,Whipstick State Park 12/10/01

Superb Fairy Wren
Spotted Pardalote
Speckled Warbler
White-eared Honeyeater
Brown-headed Honeyeater
Scarlet Robin
Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush

Spring Gully area 27/10/01
a) Spring Gully Hall

Galah
Musk Lorikeet
Blue-faced Honeyeater
Magpie-lark
Willie Wagtail
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike *(breeding)*
Common Myna *(breeding)*

N.B. The Galahs would have been breeding if the Common Mynas were not dominating the hollows in the gums near the hall.

b) Dead Dog Gully

Wedge-tailed Eagle
Eastern Rosella
Horsefields Bronze Cuckoo
Laughing Kookaburra
Sacred Kingfisher
Superb Fairy Wren
Spotted Pardalote
Striated Pardalote *(breeding)*
Weebill *(breeding)*
Yellow Thornbill
Red Wattlebird
White-eared Honeyeater
Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Olive-backed Oriole
Australian Magpie *(breeding)*
Grey Currawong
White-winged Chough
Red-browed Finch
Mistletoebird
Silvereye

Bullock Creek – Lockwood Picnic Reserve 11/11/01

Brown Stubble Quail (1)
Purple Swamp Hen (2)
Peaceful Dove (2)
Galah (10)
Little Corella (5)
Sulphur Crested Cockatoo (10)
Little Lorikeet (6)
Eastern Rosella (4)
Red-rumped Parrot (2)
Superb Fairy Wren (3)
Red Wattlebird (3)
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater (2)
Fuscous Honeyeater (4)
White-plumed Honeyeater (2)
Crested Shrike-tit (1)
Grey Shrike-thrush (1)
Willie Wagtail (2)
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (4)
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (2)
Olive-backed Oriole (heard)
Dusky Woodswallow (1)
Australian Magpie (3)
Red-browed Finch (3)
Welcome Swallow (2)
Clamorous Reed Warbler (2)
Common Blackbird (2)
Common Myna (2)

Again, disappointing to see the Common Myna beginning to establish a territorial stronghold where hollows are in high demand by native birds and animals.

A highlight of the morning was a visit out to Max Steven's property on the Maldon Road. A fine example of revegetation in the granite country where the few old remaining Yellow Box and Red Box trees are hosting a return of the bushbirds.

Australasian Grebe (1), breeding
White-faced Heron (1)
Eastern Rosella (4)
Superb Fairy Wren (4)
Yellow-rumped Thornbill (20)
White-winged Triller (1)
Rufous Songlark (heard)

Some October/November Sightings at Neilborough

Authors: Pam and John Land

Rufus Night Heron
Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Little Eagle
Wedge-tailed Eagle
Collared Sparrowhawk
Brown Goshawk
Australian Hobby
Painted Button-quail
Peaceful Dove
Purple-crowned Lorikeet
Musk Lorikeet
Red-rumped Parrot
Blue-winged Parrot
Turquoise Parrot
Dusky Woodswallow
White-browed Woodswallow
Masked Woodswallow
Australian Owlet Nightjar
Sacred Kingfisher
Rainbow Bee-eater
Superb Fairy-wren
Variegated Fairy-wren
Spotted Pardalote
Striated Pardalote
Rufus Songlark
Western Gerygone
Brown Thornbill
Little Thornbill
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
Buff-rumped Thornbill
Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
White-plumed Honeyeater
Black-chinned Honeyeater
Brown-headed Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater
Red-capped Robin
Eastern Yellow Robin
Restless Flycatcher
Jacky Winter
White-browed Babbler
Varied Sitella
Crested Bellbird
Crested Shrike-tit
Golden, Rufous Whistler
Gilberts Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush
Restless Flycatcher
Grey Fantail
White-winged Triller
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Olive-backed Oriole
Pallid Cuckoo
Black-eared Cuckoo
Horsefields Bronze Cuckoo
Grey Currawong
White-winged Chough
Rufous Songlark
Diamond Firetail
Clamorous Reed-warbler
Shy Heathwren
Silvereye

Boobook Owl, Tawny Frogmouth and Spotted Nightjar have been heard.
The Turquoise Parrot was a single, male bird which stayed for three days.

Wednesday, December 12
Book Launch & Christmas Dinner

An Invitation to all Club Members & Friends to the Launch of the Club's latest Field Guide

Spiders of Bendigo and Box-Ironbark Country of Victoria

by Jennifer M. Shield

6 pm Wednesday 12 December 2001
followed by our Christmas dinner
at Bendigo Field Naturalists Rooms
Old High St, Golden Square

(as usual, please bring salad, casserole or dessert)

BFNC Fauna Study Group
Bark Shelter Study,
Whipstick/Kamarooka State Park

Author: Ian Fenselau, study coordinator

The aim of the trial study is to establish if *Sminthopsis murina* will utilise bark shelters, and if this is demonstrated, then such could be used as a useful method for studying and surveying *Sminthopsis murina* populations in our local forests.

In an earlier pitfall survey of the Whipstick/Kamarooka State Park, *Sminthopsis murina* were recorded at various locations. The five sites selected for this study were based upon the information that the animal had been recorded at that location.

Permission was granted by Jon Cuddy, DNRE, for the collection of Ironbark tree bark waste, from forestry operations in the Wellsford State Forest, and Neville Burn, from Parks Victoria, granted permission for the bark distribution in the State Park.

In all, one hundred pieces of Ironbark tree bark, cut into approximately one metre lengths, were used in the trial study. Twenty bark pieces in a 4 x 5 grid pattern, 20 metres apart and 20 metres in from adjacent road or track were used at the five selected sites. The bark was distributed in the grid pattern between the 8th and 9th of November 2001. It is anticipated that the grid sites will be checked at approximately three months intervals, for about two years, and that Parks Victoria staff will be kept informed of the study results.

Sminthopsis murina are rarely sighted in the wild, and are known to be extremely trap-shy, thus making them a difficult subject for any research project. Even if the main aim of the study which relates to *S. murina* utilising bark shelters is not achieved, the fauna group is confident that reptiles and invertebrates will be attracted to such shelters, making this an interesting study activity for our group.

Contact Ian Fenselau for any further information (see inside front cover for contact details).

November General Meeting – Wildlife Rescue Information Network, W.R.I.N.
– Speakers: Gary and Brenda Cheers

Author: Sabine Wilkens

The idea of having a combined wildlife shelter organisation was only thought of six years ago, and from the talk it appeared as if this is one of the fastest growing industries out there.....and all staffed by volunteers.
The vast majority of animal rescues are necessary due to some action by humans which has caused the animal to become injured.

The Department of Natural Resource and Environment no longer handle any wildlife rescues (that is, neither the Fisheries and Wildlife department, nor the Fauna and Flora Department). DNRE fully endorses W.R.I.N. However, DNRE does employ a licensed snake handler to remove snakes from sheds, backyards etc.

Since this new state of affairs, W.R.I.N. have been extremely busy and they are always looking for more members and volunteers. At present, they have 70 members, some of which are supporters, some work in fundraising and publicity, some in wildlife rescues and some as shelter operators.
The membership fees largely pay for the mobile phone. This is a 24 hour phone line (always answered by a real person).

In 2000, 1038 calls were received about orphaned or injured wildlife. Of these, 382 were about birds, 112 about kangaroos and wallabies, 52 about possums and the rest about reptiles, frogs, echidnas etc.
Since 18th August this year (since they are solely responsible for wildlife rescues) they have had 679 calls already, 130 about macropods, 335 about birds and the rest about frogs, turtles, snakes and other reptiles, bats, koalas and bee swarms or just for general information.

Often W.R.I.N. re-directs callers to the correct contacts. For example, a 'frog group' in the district deals directly with green tree frogs from Queensland that come down in bunches of bananas and turn up in supermarkets. As it is illegal to take back these frogs to Queensland, this group finds homes for these displaced frogs (and makes sure they are not accidentally released in the wild).

(One club member mentioned that there are actually 'certified' frog-free bananas on the market....!)

W.R.I.N. volunteers also attend bushfires in case any wildlife need attention or need euthanising. In fact, many of the injured wildlife that W.R.I.N.volunteers are called out to, have to be put down. This is a tricky procedure as legally only police offers and Fisheries and Wildlife officers are allowed to discharge a gun on the side of the road. However in many cases it is the quickest way to kill the injured animal.

In this context, Gary appealed to the audience for a volunteer(s) who could assist the one operator in Bendigo who attends to, and often has to euthanise, injured kangaroos.

Apart from being too badly injured to be taken to a shelter, many rescues are not successful for other reasons. Just because we have 'rescued' a duck family and taken it to the nearest expanse of water, does not mean that the ducks' problems are over. They may experience lack of suitable food, habitat or shelter or harassment from the resident ducks in their new environment.

If deemed necessary, orphaned injured, sick or displaced wildlife are taken to a shelter.
Wildlife shelters do not take caged parrots, sheep and other domestic(ated) animals. Although they are staffed by volunteers, they have to follow a strict code of practice set down by the government bodies. Written records have to be made and kept about everything.

The idea of the shelter is NOT to get the animal used to human company and human food. The animals are fed a large part of what they would consume in nature. The whole aim of 'feeding them up' is to get them ready to be released back into their natural environments How they are released, depends on the animal. For example, sugar gliders are released in a group, the members of which had a chance to get to know each other in captivity. Nest boxes that they are familiar with are attached near the release sites. Releases are timed to coincide with the flowering of a major *Eucalyptus* species in the surrounding forest so that the gliders can obtain sufficient nectar meals until they are proficient at catching insects.
I was astounded how many details need to be thought of to give the release operation as much of a chance at success as possible.

After the talk, I admired these volunteers even more as I found out just how involved they are with the animals.
In spite of their extreme business Gary and Brenda Cheers are still promoting the W.R.I.N. phone number as anybody's first point of call in case they come across sick, orphaned, injured or displaced wildlife.

Please pass this phone number on to anybody you know. It is usually printed near the back page of the *Whirrakee*. It is a 24 hour phone line (no answering machine).
Naturally keep the sleeping hours for emergencies only!

W.R.I.N. Phone number: 0419 356433

News from the Garden
by Barbara Pelczynska

On Wednesday, 7th of November we had yet another very successful garden working bee. "We are finally getting on top of the weeds, it is obvious that there are much less of them in the garden now" said Jane Cleary. It is true the weeds are getting more manageable. There are more self sown salt bushes and grasses. The Feather Spear Grass and the Wallaby Grass looked spectacular. Also native birds – red wattle honeyeaters and thornbills - are now coming to the garden. All that is needed now is more rain. Next year we will add more plants and replace those that will die during summer. I suppose, like housework, the garden work is never done.

The BFNC Garden in November 2001

Author: Matthew Comer

As the weather has warmed up the garden has gradually become drier. Moving into the hot, dry summer, the resilience of the new plants in the garden (as well as the established ones) will be tested. At this stage the majority are looking healthy with just a few losses. Being adapted to local conditions, most will survive the summer extremes well.
Also with the move towards summer, many plants are coming to the end of flowering

(though some are just beginning) and now are putting their energy into seeds and fruit. For example, the *Dianella revoluta* (Flax Lily) clump near the entrance is covered in green berries which will ripen to a bright purple.

This is also the time that many species put on a flush of attractive new growth and this is evident on quite a number of trees and shrubs throughout the garden.
Plants flowering in November are:

Arthropodium strictum	Chocolate Lily
Austrodanthonia sp.	Wallaby Grass
Austrostipa elegantissima	Feather Spear Grass
Austrostipa sp.	Spear Grass
Billardiera cymosa	Sweet Apple Berry
Brachyscome multifida	Cut-leaf Daisy
Bracteantha viscosa	Sticky Everlasting
Bursaria spinosa	Sweet Bursaria
Chrysocephalum apiculatum	Common Everlasting
C. semipapposum	Clustered Everlasting
Eucalyptus viridis	Green Mallee
Glischrocaryon behrii	Golden Pennant
Gonocarpus sp.	
Goodenia benthariana	Clasping Goodenia
Grevillea alpina	Cats Claws
Hardenbergia violacea	Sarsparilla
Lomandra longifolia	Mat Rush
Melaleuca decussata	Totem Poles
Minuria interrigima	Smooth Minuria
Myoporum parvifolium	Creeping Boobialla
Olearia teretifolia	Cypress Daisy Bush
Ozothamnus obcordatus	Grey Everlasting
Pelargonium australe	Storks Bill
Pelargonium rodneyanum	Magenta Storks Bill
Pimelea humilis	Common Rice Flower
Poa sp.	Tussock Grass
Pycnosorus chrysanthus	Golden Billy Buttons
Wahlenbergia sp.	Bluebell
Westringia crassifolia	Whipstick Westringia
Westringia eremicola	Slender Westringia

Club Members' Activities

Kennington School Activity
by Bill Holsworth

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club assisted Kennington Primary School teachers with a Nature Study morning at Kennington Reservoir on 14 Nov. About 150 students (year 3-4) were divided into 6 groups to investigate, observe and gain an understanding of natural history and conservation. Three groups were guided by Club members: Jan Orr, Jane Cleary, Bill Holsworth, and Rob and Glenise Moors. Guidance of other groups was provided by the City of Greater Bendigo, NRE, NC Catchment Management Authority, and Coliban Water.

The morning was considered very successful by all participants. A week before the event Jan Orr met with the teachers. She was then able to brief our Club members on the student's preparation, expectation, and follow-up. Jan also scheduled the movement of the classes between the activities. The classes of 25 students met with three activity groups for 45 minutes. This format permitted a more detailed interaction with the students and is recommended.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club members are willing to assist other schools undertake similar teaching programs.
Contact Bill Holsworth (Secretary BFNC) by mail, phone (5443 4063, fax (5443 6763) or email: wholsworth@bigpond.com.au).

Two BFNC Excursions
by John Green

12th October excursion to Shadbolt Reserve:
Despite the weather, eight people turned up for the walk, it was great to get fresh air in the lungs. We saw such flowers as Purplish Beard Orchid, Hooded Caladenia, Leopard Orchid, Golden Pennants, Black-anther Flax Lily, Fringe Myrtle, Rosy Heath Myrtle, Daphne Heath, Many-flowered Mat Rush amongst the Grey and Red Box, Green Mallee and Yellow Gum.

28th October excursion, Kooyoora State Park (Melvilles Caves)
Due to a poor turn out it was a great walk, 1.1/2 hours; we saw flowers such as Spider Orchids, Milk Maids, pink Fingers, Rock Isotome, Blue Bells, Finger Flowers, Blue Grass Lily and Rice Flowers.

Hope to see you on the next walk.

Bendigo & District Environment Council
Wellsford Watch

Media release

Last Sunday 4th of November 43 people of all ages enjoined the Picnic in the Wellsford Forest, organised by Wellsford Watch, an action group of the Bendigo & District Environment Council.

Convenor of Wellsford Watch, Stuart Fraser said yesterday that the purpose of the picnic was to introduce people to the pleasures of the Wellsford Forest with its wildflowers and beautiful trees and show them the contrast between the western end of the Wellsford which is to be protected as Park and the State Forest section where most of the larger trees have been or are planned to be removed.

"The areas of the Wellsford Forest which have already been logged have been transformed from a beautiful and healthy forest to a very degraded forest of mainly thin stems and damaged undergrowth", Stuart Fraser said.

The Wellsford Forest is a crucial link in the protection of the biodiversity of the box-ironbark forests system whose birds are facing extinction. It should become a park before the Forestry Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment does any more damage.

For further information, contact Stuart Fraser on 5443 1326.

WELLSFORD WATCH
(Long) Response to Jon Cuddy's letter

Author: Jenny Shield

Editors' note: Jon Cuddy wrote a letter to Whirrakee in response to the findings published by Jenny and David Shield on behalf of the Wellsford Watch team. The original article (entitled "Surveys of Habitat Trees and Stumps of Coupe 05/151/003/0009") and Jon Cuddy's response were printed in the October and November editions of Whirrakee respectively. Although Jenny Shield was able to respond briefly to Jon Cuddy's letter in the November edition, space restrictions delayed her more detailed response till now:

How seriously does NRE take its responsibility to preserve habitat in the Wellsford Forest? This question is not answered in Jon Cuddy's letter to *Whirrakee*.
The Wellsford Watch survey of the sawlog coupe 05/151/003/0009 in the Wellsford Forest makes 5 main points:

1. The number of habitat trees marked were clearly short of that required in the prescriptions.

2. Few habitat trees in the size range 50-60 cm diameter at breast height over bark (DBHOB) are marked.

3. The marked habitat trees are unevenly distributed: within 100 metres of the road the number is close to 4 per hectare; but in quadrats more than 100 metres from a road is only half this.

4. There were hardly any marked habitat trees in the <40 cm DBHOB size class.

5. Informal observations showed that hollow trees were being removed.

The Wellsford State Forest is part of the Bendigo Forest Management Area (FMA) and is subject to prescriptions which includes how trees are to be retained for habitat. The following is extracted from section 5.2:

5.2 In all harvested areas the following trees are to be retained and protected:

5.2.1 Between six (6) and fourteen (14) living habitat trees per hectare as follows:-

at least two large habitat trees (greater than or equal to 60 cm diameter at breast height over bark DBHOB)),

plus at least two medium habitat trees (less than 60 cm but greater than or equal to 40 cm DBHOB) and

also at least two small habitat trees (less than 40 cm but greater than or equal to 20 cm DBHOB) if possible.

Whenever there are less than two habitat trees present per hectare in the large size class then an additional two habitat trees are required in the medium size class for each one that is unavailable.
This process is then repeated if necessary where

there is also a shortage of medium size habitat trees by similarly increasing the number of small size habitat trees required by two for each medium size habitat tree that is unavailable. Therefore where both large and medium size habitat trees are unavailable, a total of fourteen small sized habitat trees will need to be selected.

It is recommended that habitat trees are counted and marked by size class on a whole coupe basis, thereby maximising the protection of suitable trees particularly where distribution is irregular.

..... All habitat trees are to be clearly marked on two sides with a "H" in green or yellow paint prior to the commencement of all timber harvesting or silvicultural operations in general, except for firewood only coupes.

Jon Cuddy's letter states "Sufficient trees were marked and retained to ensure compliance with the prescriptions", and "NRE counted all marked trees over the whole of the coupe, not just on a sample".

The Wellsford Watch report compared the survey results with the minimum marked habitat trees that would have been required if there were sufficient trees in each size class. In fact, there was a short fall in the large trees size class, and so there should have been double the number of the shortfall added to the number of medium trees required.

Over the 44 quadrats sampled, the shortfall in large trees was such that an average of 5 trees per hectare above 40 cm should have been marked for habitat. In fact there was a mean of 3.2 marked per hectare.

There were 20 sampled quadrats more than 100m from a road or a race. The prescriptions state that 40 marked large trees should be retained. 24 were actually marked. Assuming that there were no other large trees available, there was a shortfall of 16. This number must be doubled (32) and added to the 40 marked trees required in the medium size class, i.e. 72 trees should be marked, but only 13 were actually marked. Thus an additional 59 trees should have been marked in these quadrats. Our figures show that 257 sawlogs (mostly medium trees) were removed from the same 20 quadrats, more than enough to allow for the extra 59 trees which should have been marked.

We also reject any implication that unmarked retained trees qualify as habitat trees as the prescriptions state that the habitat trees are to be clearly marked.

Jon Cuddy's letter does not address point number 2.

With respect to point number 3, Jon Cuddy's letter implies but does not state that the uneven distribution of marked habitat trees was due to the large and medium trees being clumped initially.

This is not borne out by our survey results which show that in most of the quadrats measured, even those away from the road, many medium trees were removed for sawlogs, more than sufficient to make up for the shortfall in required habitat trees.

Only 6 quadrats of the 44 sampled had less than 6 sawlogs (mostly medium trees) removed. Of the 20 quadrats more than 100 m from road or race only two had less than 6 sawlogs removed, i.e. there were plenty of medium trees from which marked habitat trees could have been chosen.

With respect to point 4, Jon Cuddy has admitted that NRE do not mark trees in the 20 - 40 cm class. He claims that this is not necessary; but it is required by the prescriptions.

With respect to point 5, Jon Cuddy denies, but produces no evidence to "refute", the suggestion that hollow trees are being systematically targeted for removal. We did not collect systematic evidence to support the suggestion, so on this point he is as likely to be right as we are. We merely report that some of those engaged in the survey observed a surprisingly large number of felled hollow trees in some quadrats, including the one pictured below.

So how seriously does NRE take its responsibility to preserve habitat? Insufficient habitat trees were marked, and the hollow trees removed would have been valuable habitat (see photograph next page).

In conclusion, Jon Cuddy did not cite any evidence to support his statement that sufficient habitat trees were marked, or his implication that the uneven distribution of habitat trees shown by the Wellsford Watch Survey was the result of an initial uneven distribution of available trees. We would like to see a copy of NRE's records for Coupe 05/151/003/0009 showing the numbers of marked habitat trees in each size class and where they are in the coupe. Without this information, the results of our survey are the best figures in the public arena, and they show clearly that NRE did not follow the prescriptions.

Peoplescape – A Celebration of Federation Project

Author: Barbara Pelczynska

Over the years one of our club members, Trish Pilling (Pillaroo Wildlife Shelter), developed a relationship with Strathfieldsaye Primary School which led to her being chosen by the children for their School's *Peoplescape* figure.

Peoplescape: A Federation Celebration was the final national event for the year. It gave individuals and organisations the opportunity, using a life-size person shaped 'canvas', to create a representation of their hero, someone whom they feel has significantly affected their lives, their community or their country.

The children of the school had this to say about their chosen *Peoplescape* hero:

Why Trish is so important:
Trish is important to us because she looks after animals that are native to Australia. She takes the time to come to school and share the animals in her care with us so that we will understand how precious Australian animals are and how we can take care of them. We often don't get to see native animal sup close and Trish provides us with a chance to to get really close and see how special they are.
Trish is so important to us. She is a special person for looking after hurt and sick animals and nursing them back to health so they can go back to their natural habitat.
Trish shows us how to be gentle, caring and loving. Trish is very special and we know that we are lucky to have her come and visit us at school
Trish takes the time to listen to us. She shares and cares!

What contributions has Trish made?
Trish helps us to understand more about native animals. Trish brings in animals for us to see up close. We get to see them when they are very young and learn about their needs and how they live. It is very special to see animals close up and to see someone really care for them. Trish helps us to be caring people and to know what to do if we find an injured animal.
We need to take care of our environment and Trish helps us to be aware of native animals in our environment and how we can make a difference. It is important that we know about our native animals.
We like to write about our experiences with Trish and investigate and find out more information about the animals she brings in. We like to share what Trish tells us with our families.

Media Release

FIELD NATURALISTS SPIDER BOOK LAUNCHED

Ms Jacinta Allen, Member for Bendigo East will launch a Field Guide to *Spiders of Bendigo and Box-Ironbark Country of Victoria* on Wednesday 12 December at 6 pm at the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Rooms at Golden Square. The book features colour photographs and notes on 106 spider species that are commonly found in the woodlands of Victoria and modified environments such as buildings, gardens and farmland.

President of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, Barbara Pelczynska, said that the spider book is the latest in the series of Field Guides published by the Club. "These Field Guides have enabled many people without specialist training to find out the names of native trees, flowers and birds that are seen in and around Bendigo. Now we will also be able to put names to spiders commonly seen", Barbara Pelczynska said.

Dr Jenny Shield, who wrote the book, is an Honorary Research Associate at La Trobe University Bendigo where she was previously a lecturer in Biology.

"Although the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has published *Spiders of Bendigo* and encouraged me in many ways, the book would not have been possible without the facilities and support provided to me by La Trobe University Bendigo," Jenny Shield said.

Jenny started to take a particular interest in spiders when her student Michael Crawford was undertaking a study in the diversity of invertebrates at Red Hill at Heathcote in 1991.

"We were shaking all these spiders out of shrubs and finding lots more in leaf litter, and I didn't know how to go about identifying them. I had no idea there were so many spiders of so many different species.

"Then in 1993 I had the opportunity to take some study leave, so I went to the Queensland Museum. The curator in Arachnology, Dr Robert Raven and the previous curator Dr Valerie Davies were instrumental in getting me started on the task of learning about spiders. Since then, my main aim has been to learn about the spider fauna of Box-Ironbark country. This book is a beginning. There is still lots more to learn. Most sites in the Box-Ironbark Forest would have upwards of 150 different species, mostly not named yet.

"I have also had the help of some keen naturalists, particularly Julie Strudwick from Upper Lurg near Benalla and Jill Hooper from near Cohuna. Julie was particularly keen to see a Field Guide in print and had collected spiders from her property and took many photos of them. Approximately half the photos in the book were taken by her. Unfortunately, Julie died last June, so didn't see the book in print. The book is a memorial to her," Jenny said.

Spiders of Bendigo and Box-Ironbark Country of Victoria will be on sale at the launch at a discounted price. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

For further information contact Jenny Shield 5441 3181 or Barbara Pelczynska 5439 3075

Appeal for Opinions

We would like to know how members feel about the workshops that were run this year prior to several of the General Meetings. These workshops were run on a trial basis and were to be reviewed at the end of the year. To do this,the committee needs some feedback from members. Please let us know if you enjoyed the workshops, if you like the present format or if it should be changed (e.g.longer, shorter, separate time from general meetings altogether) possible topics for further workshop and people who might run them.

VFNCA 2002 March Campout
Volcanoes and Springs of Central Victoria
8th - 11th MArch 2002

Follow up to first circular

Author: Noel Schleiger, FNCV Vice President

Preparations are well under way for the next VFNCA campout. The program is varied and exciting (two pages of the circular, including the program were printed in the November *Whirrakee*, the other ones are on page 12/13 of this edition.
An omission from the registration (booking) form (this was also included in the November *Whirrakee*) was a **'registration fee only'** option, for those members who do not need meals or accommodation, but wish to participate in the evening program and excursions. The rate for this is $10 per day or $30 for the full program, payable when booking.

It should be noted that the host club is taken on a big financial commitment when booking venues over this long weekend. The support of all members would be much appreciated.

Planning for 2003 Campout

The VFNCA campount for 2003 is hosted by the Bendigo FNC but will be held in Melbourne. If anybody is keen to be involved in the planning of this major event, please let the club committee know.
The campout will happen during the March Long Weekend while Melbourne is hosting the Grand Prix.
There is a challenge!!

VFNCA 2002 MARCH CAMP

VOLCANOES AND MINERAL SPRINGS OF CENTRAL VICTORIA - 8th - 11th MARCH 2002

Hosted by the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc.

FIRST CIRCULAR

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria would like to invite you to the March 2002 VFNCA camp to be based at Campaspe Downs Country Resort, 7km SW of Kyneton. This circular provides details of the accommodation and a Registration /Excursion Selection Form.

VENUE: Campaspe Downs Country Resort, Kyneton/Trentham Road, Kyneton 3444, (2km NE of Tylden) Mel. Ed. 24, Map 509 F9; VicRoads 2nd Ed. Map 59 H6.

DATES: Friday 8th March 2002 evening to Lunchtime Monday 11th March
Registration available from 4 pm. Rooms to be vacated by 10am Monday.

COSTS:

3 nights' accommodation, meals and registration (Friday dinner to Monday lunch)	$178.00 per head
Children over 2 years full rates	
Meals only and registration	$97.00 per head

ACCOMMODATION

Total accommodation at Campaspe Downs is for 96 people. The bunkhouse provides comfortable accommodation for 72 people occupying the lower bunks only. It would be helpful, however, if some people offer to sleep in the upper bunks. Most rooms will sleep 6 people in the lower bunks. The adjacent toilet and ablution block is new and spacious.

There are also some cabins with *en suite* which are suitable as family units; also a limited number of double bed units, and a few units with a bunk and two single beds particularly useful for single people with special needs for an *en suite*. All linen, pillows and doonas are provided. Bring your own towels and personal toiletries. Please indicate with whom you are willing to share a room.

Meals provided are breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper from Friday dinner to Monday lunch inclusive. Cooked breakfasts and 2-course dinners will be provided, and individually packed lunches will be supplied to take on excursions. Supper is available each night and self-service tea and coffee-making facilities available throughout the day.

Camping sites are not available at Campaspe Downs. The nearest camping facility is Kyneton Caravan Park (PH: 5422 1612). next to the Kyneton Botanic Gardens. The Kyneton Visitor Information Centre (PH: 5422 6110) will provide information on other local accommodation. They are open seven days a week, from 9am-5pm.

PROGRAM

Full day and half day excursions will be conducted on Saturday, Sunday and Monday morning led by local and invited field naturalists and speakers on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The Registration Form (attached) provides space for indicating the excursions that individual participants would like to join. Tables only are available for display purposes. Please book with Secretary if you would like to organize a display. We'll have books for sale (see Booklist). FNCV gives good discounts – why not place your order now and pick them up at camp.

We plan each day as follows:

Breakfast from 7 - 8 am
Leave camp 8.30 - 9.00 am — Return to camp approximately 4 pm
VFNCA meeting 5 pm Sat (& Sun if needed)
Dinner 6.30 pm
Briefings 7.45 pm — Evening speaker 8 pm

FOR INFO: Dorothy Mahler 9435 8408 Secretary; Pamela Faragher 9836 8414 Accomm. Officer, Joan Broadberry 9846 1218 Treasurer: Email: BJAMES7460@AOL.COM
(Please do not ring FNCV Office)

We are here
BENDIGO
Castlemaine
Maldon
Daylesford
Kyneton
Woodend
Malmsbury
Heathcote
Lake Eppalock
Lake Cairn Curran
GREAT DIVIDING RANGE
CALDER HWY
MIDLAND HWY
PYRENEES HWY
NORTHERN HWY
BALLARAT
SUNBURY

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Mammal Survey Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, December 12
Christmas Dinner
At the Hall, Bring Salad, Casserole or Dessert. Come early (to attend the book launch), to sit down at 6:30, and visit with friends for as long as you like.

Please note: There is no meeting in January

Wednesday, February 13
In the first meeting for the year, all members are invited to bring slides along.

Clean up of Clubrooms

This yearly (very social) event will be on **Saturday, 15th December, starting at 9am.** Please bring gloves rags and dusters and what ever else you think will be needed

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Christmas Picnic/BBQ lunch at Lyel Glen.

Sunday, December 16
Jack Ipsen has once again, invited members to join him in the Annual Christmas lunch at his property at Lyel Glen near Redesdale. Please bring all your food and drink as well as a chair (if you need one). There are plenty interesting things to see before you sit down for lunch.
Please contact a committee member if you need instructions how to get there.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433

VFNCA 2002 March Camp
Volcanoes and Mineral Springs of Central Victoria

The first circular for this camp has been received. Pages 2 and 3 were printed on page 13 and 14 of the November issue, pages 1 and 4 are printed on pages 13/14 of this edition. The dates are 8-11th March 2002 and the camp is held at the Campaspe Downs Country Resort, 7km SW of Kyneton. It is hosted by the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria.
Please ring Sabine Wilkens on 54 432797 (ah) or 54 447370 (bh) to get a copy of the complete circular if needed.

Wednesday, December 12
Book Launch & Christmas Dinner

An Invitation to all Club Members & Friends to the Launch of the Club's latest Field Guide

Spiders of Bendigo and Box-Ironbark Country of Victoria

by Jennifer M. Shield

6 pm Wednesday 12 December 2001
followed by our Christmas dinner
at Bendigo Field Naturalists Rooms
Old High St, Golden Square

(as usual, please bring salad, casserole or dessert)